

The Kenneth and Ethel Shelton House
651 N. Horners Lane
Rockville, Md.

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I. Location

The Shelton House is located on the east side of North Horners Lane, between Southlawn Lane and Dover Road.¹ It is across Horners Lane from the Lincoln Park Community Center at the corner of Frederick Avenue and Horners Lane. The Lincoln Park Galilean Fisherman's Cemetery is across Frederick Lane from the Community Center.²



Lincoln Park Area Map
showing location of 651
N. Horner's Lane

The 1949 Sanborn Map of the area shows two residences north of the Shelton House³, but presently it is the only residential structure on the east side of the 600 block of North Horners Lane. The attached photos show the Shelton House surrounded by modern brick industrial buildings.⁴ On the west side of the 600 block of Horners Lane are residences, including a brick veneered bungalow, and an older store building.⁵ Behind the Shelton House is a bungalow formerly owned by McRein and Howard Thompson, now being used for an auto parts business.⁶

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING



Lincoln Park/Galilean Fisherman



Lincoln Park Community Center

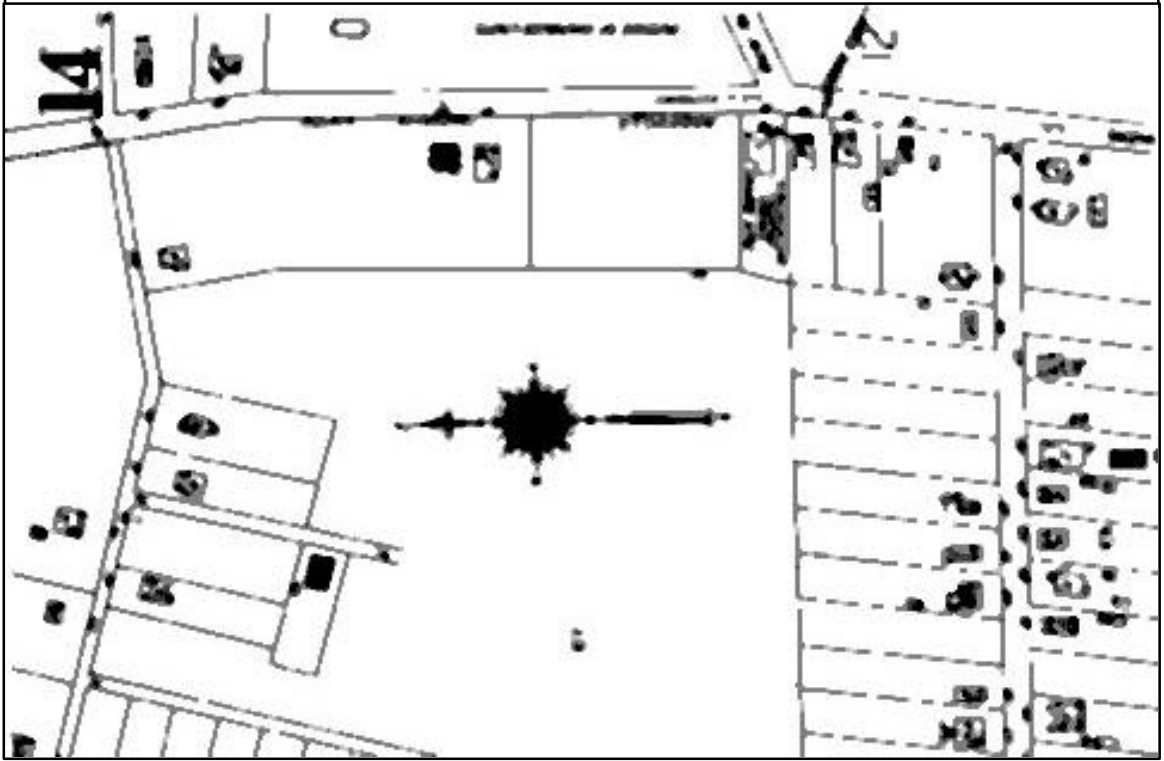


East Side of Horner's Lane showing industrial use. Surrounding property is owned by Envelopes Unlimited.



West side of Horner's Lane across from subject property

1949 Sanborn Map of Rockville/ Lincoln Park showing subject property. The east side of Horner's Lane is not within the Rockville City limits. 651 is outlined in red.



II. Architectural and design significance.

The Shelton House is a small vernacular one-story wood frame cottage built in 1931⁷, with German-style novelty tongue and groove siding and some classical and Arts and Crafts details. Its most distinctive feature is its roof with its original embossed tin shingles and jerkin-head gables on the ends of the original block, the entry porch roof and front addition gable. The foundation is concrete block, the central chimney is brick, and the porch floors are concrete. Most of the double-hung sash are six-over-one. Most landscaping has been removed, but there are two pine trees remaining in the front yard.

The house originally had four rooms over a basement,⁸ 20 feet by 22 feet.⁹ A covered entrance porch with a jerkin-head gable and two Tuscan columns projects from the original block. A later 14 foot by 14 foot addition included a front porch with an entry door and three-over-one Arts and Crafts style window. A final 18 foot by 25 foot addition with inset back porch was attached to the rear.¹⁰

The Shelton House was designed and built in 1931 by its owner, plumber Kenneth Shelton, and his cousin.¹¹ Its size, building materials, floor plan, and style are similar to other vernacular homes of the time in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, which lies across the road and to the west of Horner's Lane. Its jerkin-head gables, which can be found elsewhere in the West End of Rockville,¹² its classical columns, and embossed tin roof show a pride in homebuilding on what was, at the time, a dirt country road.

III. History and significance.

The Shelton House at 651 North Horners Lane is the last residential structure on the east side of the 600 block of Horners Lane. It was part of the African-American community of Lincoln Park and of the Shelton Family enclave that was centered in that block. Male and female members of the Shelton family are and were distinguished citizens of Lincoln Park and Rockville.

The Shelton House lies on the west half of Lot 4 of an unrecorded subdivision of a tract of 137 acres of Valentine's Garden Enlarged¹³ purchased by Margaret V. Griffith in 1897. Jeremiah Crabb originally patented Valentine's Garden and enlarged and resurveyed it several times. His daughter Matilda and her husband James E. Lackland sold her inherited share of 228 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres to Brice Selby for \$2500 in 1832.¹⁴ After his death, the Valentine's Garden Enlarged tract and parts of Ashley and Two Brothers, totaling 257 acres, 3 roods, and 25 perches, were sold to Chandler Keys for an undisclosed total, but with a \$1,579.06 indenture.¹⁵ Prior to his death in 1896, Keys had sold off some of his land in five sales reducing his holding to 137 acres.¹⁶ (One of these five transactions was probably the sale of eight acres to William Welch for the original Lincoln Park subdivision in 1891.¹⁷ Another sale was probably that of one acre to Simeon Berry, half of which was resold to Reuben Hill, another prominent early citizen of Lincoln Park.¹⁸)

In 1896 the heirs of Chandler Keys went to Equity Court to divide his estate. His daughter Margaret Virginia Griffith purchased the 137-acre Valentine's Garden Enlarged tract for \$6,875.37.¹⁹ According to the 1880 Census, Margaret Griffith was living with her husband David, a store clerk, and two children in the Medley District (Poolesville). In the 1900 Census, she was listed in the Fourth District (Rockville) as a widow farmer with four children. (Perhaps she was living on the 137 acre tract, part of which became Lincoln Park extended, since black families connected with Lincoln Park are enumerated in adjacent census visitations, i.e., Joppy, Duffin, and Hawkins.²⁰) It had been reported in the Sentinel of October 4, 1895, that Margaret V. Griffith had obtained a divorce from David Porter Griffith.²¹

In 1906, Margaret V. Griffith subdivided her tract and sold most of it between 1910 and 1926.²² In 1917 she sold several acres to the Galilean Fishermen for a cemetery, which later became the Lincoln Park Cemetery. Lot 4 was sold to Frederick Thomas, consisting of .51 acre.²³ In 1919 Frederick Thomas sold the .51 acre lot to James Wood.²⁴

James Wood was the brother of Maggie Wood Shelton, married to Henry Shelton, Sr. Maggie Wood Shelton was one of the seven children of Polly Wood and, as family tradition has it, a white confederate civil war veteran in Virginia. When Polly Wood's husband died, Maggie Wood Shelton, already living in Rockville moved her mother and six siblings from Virginia to live at her home at 606 North Horners Lane. Henry Shelton, Sr., was a well-respected citizen of Rockville and Lincoln Park, who had come from Virginia to Rockville as a young man to work for the Viett family plumbing business, for whom he had worked in Virginia previously. Henry Shelton, Sr., was one of the five founders of the Galilean Fishermen. He is credited with founding the first fire department in Rockville.²⁵

In 1923, James Wood and his wife conveyed Lot 4 to Maggie Shelton, his sister.²⁶ In 1931, Kenneth Shelton, one of the sons of Maggie and Henry Shelton, Sr., and his wife Ethel built their home on the west half of Lot 4, a gift from his parents. Their home is 651 North Horners Lane, the

subject of this research. The east half of the lot was given to another son, Henry F., and his wife, Lucinda, who built a house facing Mason Drive on their half lot in about 1937.²⁷

Before marrying and moving to Horner's Lane, Ethel Shelton, born Ethel Jackson in 1913, lived on Falls Road in Rockville. She attended seven years of public school in Rockville, the extent of schooling available to blacks at the time. For two additional years she took the trolley in to Shaw Junior High School in Washington. She and her husband Kenneth raised six children in the house at 651 North Horner's Lane. She worked at the Civil Defense office in Olney, did day work as a domestic, and worked as a cook in private homes. Kenneth Shelton, born in 1909, worked as a laborer at the Bethesda Naval Hospital and moonlighted as a plumber for the Viett family plumbing business. The Viett family, originally from Frankfurt, Germany, employed several members of the Shelton family.²⁸

At the time the Sheltons moved to Horner's Lane, there were only two other houses on their side of the block. The Henry Shelton, Sr., family lived at 606 North Horner's Lane (now demolished), across and south of #651 and near a neighborhood store. The sisters of Kenneth and Henry F. Shelton, Annie and Marilyn, and their husbands built and operated the neighborhood store, now called Johnny's, until about 1970. The sisters and their families and other family members also lived at #612 and #618 Horner's Lane. Both houses and the store are still standing.

In 1931, Kenneth Shelton designed #651 and his cousin Colston Howard helped him build the original block of four rooms. He later built two one-room additions. The Sheltons' house and yard were a showplace, with a rose trellis, a grove of trees with lawn chairs, and festive Christmas decorations. Around 1937, Henry Shelton, Sr., gave the east half of Lot 4 to his son Henry F. who had married Lucinda Kearney of Rocky Mount, NC. They built their home there facing Mason Drive in 1937 and raised three children. The area was rezoned industrial, which radically changed the character of the neighborhood. After Henry F.'s death in 1958, his widow Lucinda stayed in the house until 1967, when she sold it. After Kenneth Shelton's death in 1968, his widow Ethel stayed in #651 until 1973, for a total of 42 years. Isolated by modern industrial structures, she sold #651 in 1973. She now lives with one of her daughters on Lincoln Avenue in Lincoln Park. Wilma Shelton Bell, daughter of Henry F. and Lucinda Shelton, has also remained in the neighborhood.²⁹

Several family members are nearby in Lincoln Park Cemetery, including Polly Wood (1850-1929), Margaret Shelton (mother of Henry Shelton, Sr., 1855-1929), Henry Shelton, Sr., (1878-1947), Margaret (Maggie) Shelton (1873-1969), Henry F. Shelton (1911-1958), and Kenneth L. Shelton (1909-1969).³⁰

In 1940, Henry and Maggie Shelton's gifts to their sons and daughters-in-law of the two halves of Lot 4 were formalized.³¹ In 1972, Ethel Shelton, widow, sold #651 to John C. and Marjorie Mackey.³² Confirmation of the ownership of #651, together with neighboring properties³³, in the name of John B. Mackey, et al, t/a 649 Joint Venture, 651 North Horner's Lane, was accomplished in 1984.³⁴ The house was recently used for storage, but appears to be in fair condition. The owners have received several maintenance violation tickets and have applied to demolish the structure.



The former Thompson house on the rear half of Lot #4 behind 651 N. Horner's Lane



Front portico, rear view and door to side addition, of 651 N. Horner's Lane. Photos taken January 2001 by Gail Littlefield.

Endnotes: Montgomery County Land Records are cited by Liber/Folio as L/F (date). Photographs listed as attachments in the document are incorporated into the text.

¹ See Attachment 1, map of Lincoln Park for location of house, comprising front cover of "Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan", City of Rockville Planning Department files.

² See attachment 2, photos of neighborhood and environment (cemetery and community center).

³ See attached excerpt of 1949 Sanborn map, City of Rockville files.

⁴ Attachment 3, area photographs 1-4 taken by Gail Littlefield, January 4, 2001.

⁵ See photos attachment 5 (west side)

⁶ See photo, attachment 6 (auto parts)

⁷ Telephone interview with Ethel Shelton, 1/3/2001, hereinafter "Ethel Shelton."

⁸ Ethel Shelton.

⁹ See attached State Department of Assessments and Taxation-Montgomery County, Maryland worksheet, hereinafter "tax worksheet."

¹⁰ See photos nos. xxx(house).

¹¹ Ethel Shelton.

¹² Kay Fanning, Lincoln Park, (n. d.), at 7, in City of Rockville files.

¹³ Crabb patent cite.

¹⁴ L/F BS5 515(9/29/1832).

¹⁵ L/F JGH1/488(10/27/1852).

¹⁶ L/F JA58/149(4/6/1897).

¹⁷ See Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form, survey M:26/15/4 "The Reuben Hill House."

¹⁸ Op. Cit.; L/F EBP22/385.

¹⁹ L/F JA58/149(4/1/1897), referring to Equity #1321(1896).

²⁰ Hurley, William, Index to 1990 Census for Montgomery County, Maryland (1998).

²¹ Malloy, Mary Gordon, and Jacobs, Marion W., Genealogical Abstracts(Montgomery County Historical Society 1986).

²² Eileen McGuckian, MHT Inventory form for Lincoln Park, 1979.

²³ L/F 248/60(1/4/1915).

²⁴ L/F 294/291(8/29/1919).

²⁵ Telephone interview with Wilma Shelton Bell, granddaughter of Henry and Maggie Shelton, Sr., 1/2/2001, hereinafter "Wilma Bell."

²⁶ L/F 362/328(2/28/1923).

²⁷ Ethel Shelton; Wilma Bell.

²⁸ Ethel Shelton; Wilma Bell.

²⁹ Ethel Shelton; Wilma Bell.

³⁰ Janet Manuel, unpublished list of headstones at Lincoln Park Cemetery, 1977, "Lincoln Park Cemetery" file, Peerless Rockville.

³¹ L/F 795/42(9/9/1940)(Henry F. and Lucinda's half of 11,218 square feet); L/F 798/32(9/30/1940).

³² L/F 4276/666(9/18/1972).

³³ See Plat 86/9074(10/29/68).

³⁴ L/F 6510/648(8/30/1984).